KEIZOKU-SCANS
...and the manga goes on
DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES SHARE OUTSIDE OF IRC!

5
Cantarella
Story and Art by
YOU HIGURI

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Cantarella

STORY AND ART BY

YOU HIGURI

VOLUME 5

go!comi

Translation – Christine Schilling
Adaptation – Audry Taylor
Production Assistant – Mallory Reaves
Lettering & Design– Fawn Lau
Production Manager – James Dashiell
Editor – Audry Taylor

A Go! Comi manga

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Visit us online at www.gocomi.com
e-mail: info@gocomi.com

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◆ Pope Alexander VI ◆

An ambitious man who sold his own son's soul to the devil in exchange for the Papal throne. He has solidified the foundation of his authority through nepotism.

◆ Michelotto (Chiaro) ◆

A legendary assassin who wears the mask of "Michelotto." Chiaro is Cesare's closest confidant -- and the only thing standing between him and madness.

◆ Juan Borgia ◆

Cesare's little brother is favored by their father and thus leads a blessed life. He is the Duke of Gandia and has nothing but scorn for his older brother Cesare.

◆ Lucrezia Borgia ◆

A sweet girl who adores her older brother Cesare. She was forced into an arranged marriage with Lord Pesaro, but now calls a quiet monastery home.

◆ Volpe ◆

Cesare's loyal retainer who's been by his side since childhood. He idolizes Cesare's tyrannical nature.

◆ Sancia d'Aragon ◆

The wife of Jofre, third son in the Borgia family. She has an uninhibited personality and a unique "relationship" with Cesare.

Story So Far

Reunited with her brother Cesare, Lucrezia struggles to keep secret the forbidden feelings she has for him. After being provoked by Sancia's jealous words, she confesses her sinful love to Cesare, who gently rejects it. The distraught Lucrezia is abducted by her ex-husband, whose attempt to rape her is thwarted by the noble Chiaro. Feeling truly alone, Cesare turns to the adulterous Sancia for comfort...

& Cast of Characters

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HIGURI'S ITALIAN GADGET.....Page 182

Cesare Borgia

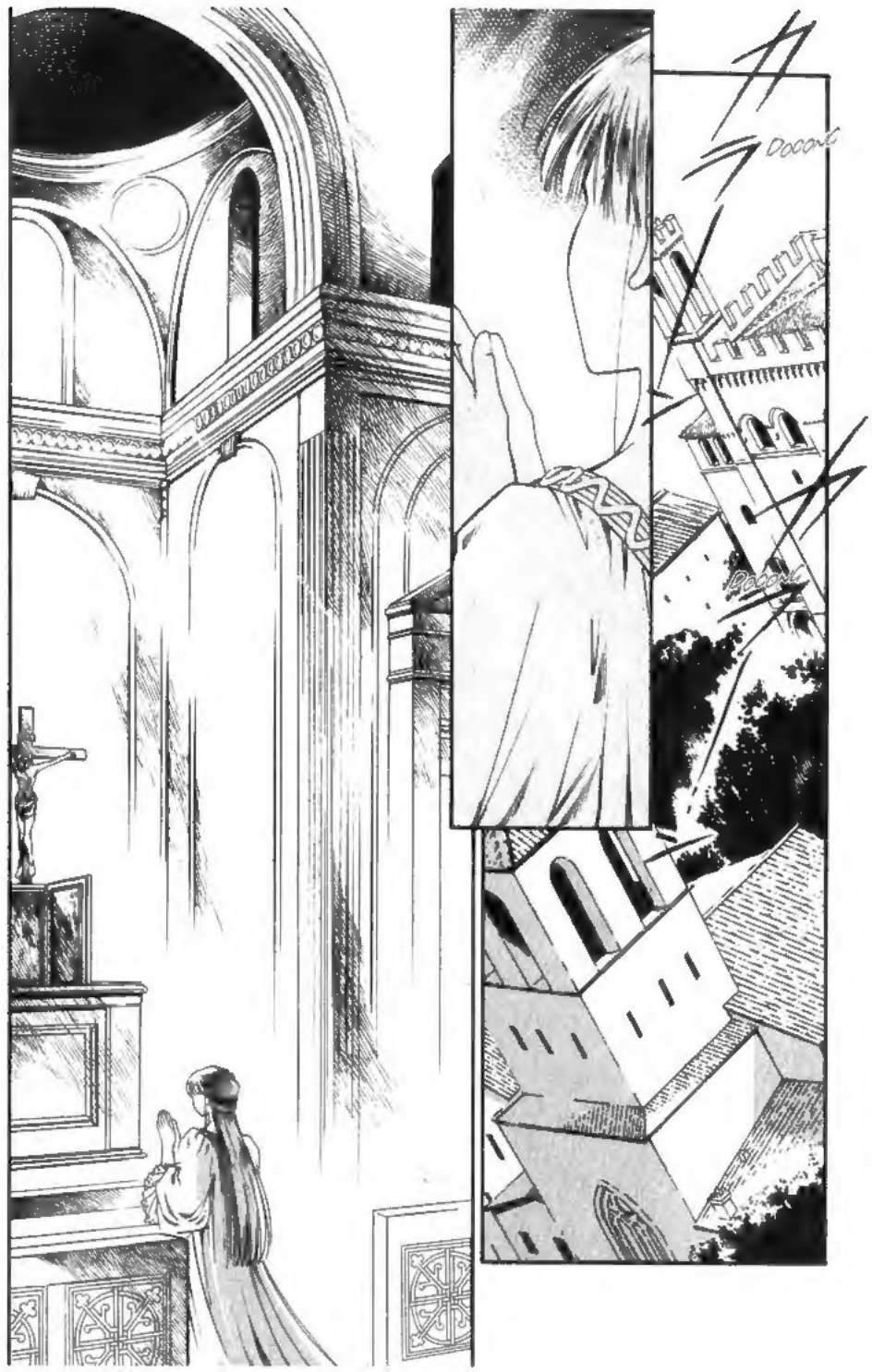
The hero of our story. His father sold his soul to the devil in exchange for gaining the Papal throne. Though constantly on the brink of being consumed by the demonic powers that dwell within him, he will let nothing stop him from fulfilling his ambition of unifying Italy.

This work is fiction.

Various cities and territories of Italy during *Cantarella* period

(end of the 15th century)

THE COMPOSURE OF AN ANGELIC MARBLE STATUE.
!
!
IF THE SISTERS CAUGHT YOU, IT'D CREATE AN UPROAR!
THIS IS AN ALL-FEMALE MONASTERY! MEN ARE NOT PERMITTED INSIDE!
I JUST CAME TO SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING.
IT PUTS MY MIND AT EASE TO SEE YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.


Dooon
Dooon

I SWEAR. HOW COULD SUCH GOSSIP GET INSIDE THESE WALLS?
AHEM. SHUNNING CHORES IS NOT TOLERATED HERE.
ESPECIALLY WITH A DAUGHTER OF THE BORGIA UNDER MY CARE.
I'm not cut out for this.
OH, ABBEY MOTHER!
EEK!
THEY SAY IT'S ENTIRELY LADY SANCIA WHO IS FEEDING THE FLAME BUT...
...DOES THAT EXCUSE CESARE FOR HIS BEHAVIOR? IS THIS WHAT HE THINKS THE WORK OF GOD IS ABOUT?
MAYBE IT'S IN THE BORGIA BLOOD...
PRIN-CESS...

DO I REALLY LOOK THAT WAY?
rustle
!
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD ...
HIDE!
MY WORD.
WHAT A THING INDEED.
IT'S NOT AT ALL THE KIND OF BEHAVIOR I IMAGINED A CARDINAL ENGAGING IN.
IT'S MOST DREAD-FUL!
!?
IT'S THE BIGGEST SCANDAL AT COURT RIGHT NOW.
EVEN THOUGH HE KNOWS THIS, HE STILL ...?
BUT PRINCESS SANCIA'S THE WIFE OF HIS YOUNGEST BROTHER...

THE ITALIANS LIVE BY THREE RULES:
MANGIARE! CANTARE! AMORE!*
FORGET ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENED!
WHEN IT'S TIME FOR FUN, GO ALL OUT AND ENJOY YOURSELF!
THE CARNIVAL IS THE LAST ENJOYMENT BEFORE TEMPERANCE.
AND THE WAR HAS ENDED!
SO COME ON! LET'S CELEBRATE!
CHEER
TH...
THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE!
IF YOU KEEP LOOKING AROUND LIKE THAT, YOU'LL RUN INTO SOMEONE.
BUMP
EE!

*Translator's Note:
Italian for, "Eat! Sing! Love!"

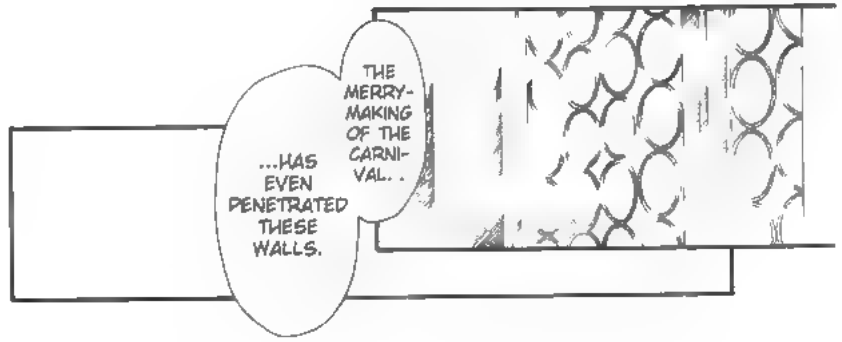
COME.
I WON'T LET YOU SUFFOCATE IN SUCH A DULL PLACE ANY LONGER.
!?
THE CARNIVAL IN TOWN SHOULD BE AT ITS PEAK RIGHT NOW!
WHY NOT HAVE SOME FUN FOR ONCE?
PLEASE WAIT!
AH!
BUT ...!
CHIARO!

JUST FOR TODAY, IN THE THRONGS OF THIS CELE-BRATION, I'LL LEAVE IT ALL BEHIND.
FORGET ABOUT EVERY-THING ELSE.
JUST FOR TODAY.
OKAY ...
THANK YOU, CHIARO.

!
SEE? JUST AS I SAID.
ARE YOU OKAY?
WHISTLE
YOU LOVEBIRDS ENJOYING YOUR-SELVES?
AAH, TO BE YOUNG!
JUST ...
...HOLD ON TIGHT TO THIS.
PUT ON A MASK ...
...AND YOU CAN DISAP-PEAR.

Heh.
HOW BITTER OF YOU.
HOW LONG ...
...DO YOU INTEND TO PUT UP WITH THIS FOR?
TRIUM-PHANT ?
MORE LIKE A COWARD'S RETURN AFTER LEANING ON THE STRENGTH OF A HIRED SPANIARD.
AND THEY'RE ALL THE MORE MERRY BECAUSE JUAN HAD A TRIUMPHANT RETURN.
THAT'S BE-CAUSE ...
...THEY SUFFERED THROUGH WAR THIS YEAR.

PUT UP... WITH WHAT?
I'M SURE YOU'VE FIGURED OUT BY NOW THAT...
...YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE IS TO REIGN OVER THE LOWLIFES WHO TREAD ON YOU.
WHY DO YOU SIT SILENTLY BY? WITH ONE WORD YOU COULD--
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD BE TELLING ME?
VOLPE.


THE MERRY-MAKING OF THE CARNI-VAL. .
...HAS EVEN PENETRATED THESE WALLS.

Heh heh
ONCE AGAIN ...
...HE'LL BE CRITICIZED FOR NEPOTISM!
HELLO BOYS!
HOW CAN YOU SMILE LIKE THAT?
A MAN LIKE HIM WOULD NEVER VALUE YOUR SYMPATHY!
IT VEXES ME SO!
WHY DOES SOMEONE LIKE YOU--?
I FEEL BAD FOR MY FATHER.
GASP
WERE YOU TWO HAVING A HEART-TO-HEART CONVERSATION?
IT'S CARNIVAL TIME! WE'VE GOT TO HAVE AS MUCH FUN AS WE CAN!
LET'S SEE THE TOWN, CESARE!
AND IF IT'S OKAY WITH HIM, THAT FINE FELLOW CAN COME TOO.

YES ...
WITH THE KING OF NAPLES NOW DECEASED, THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE HEIR, SIGNORI FEDERIGO...
...MUST WIN THE APPROVAL OF THE POPE TO GAIN HIS INHERITANCE.
WHEN I HAVE TIME, I WILL INVESTIGATE FURTHER, BUT...
...IT SEEMS SAFE TO SAY THAT THINGS ARE GOING AS HIS HOLINESS THOUGHT.
I SEE...
THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT SIGNORI FEDERIGO KNOWS HE WILL NEED THE POPE'S HELP...
...TO KEEP FRANCE FROM ATTACKING WITH ITS FULL POWER.
THE FRENCH KING, CHARLES VIII, IS NOT THE TYPE OF MAN TO GIVE UP EASILY.
THAT BEING THE CASE, NAPLES WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO ACCEPT WHATEVER CONDITIONS THE POPE IMPOSES.

I make loud events like that
THERE ARE STILL MATTERS I NEED TO ATTEND TO.
IF YOU WANT TO GO TO THE CARNIVAL SO BADLY, GO BY YOURSELF.
LEAVE THAT FOR LATER!
C' MON
I CAME ALL THE WAY OVER HERE JUST TO INVITE YOU.
YOU KNOW ...
...I'M PRETTY SERIOUS ABOUT YOU!
YOU WERE REALLY GOOD. I MEAN IT. ♡
HMPH.
IT'S AN HONOR TO BE COMPLIMENTED BY YOU, PRINCESS.
BUT...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT I'LL STAY HERE.
I'LL REPORT SOME OTHER TIME.
THANK YOU.
WHAT A SHAME
whisper
NO INTEREST IN LADIES?
WHO KNOWS ?
OH, SANCIA...
I DON'T REMEMBER CALLING YOU OUT HERE TO BORGO.
SUCH A COLD REMARK.
YOU SHOULD KNOW IT WAS NO EASY TASK SNEAKING IN HERE!

!
RAR
!
JUST WHAT IS THIS ANYWAY?
NNG ...
MHM ...

...SUCH A COMPLIMENT MAKES YOU SOUND LIKE A CHEAP WHORE.
WHA--!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN!?
BEING TOLD SOMETHING LIKE THAT BY ME...
...WOULD MAKE ANY NORMAL MAN CRY WITH JOY!
THAT MUST MEAN I'M NOT A NORMAL MAN.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!
SUCH A BLASÉ ATTITUDE TOWARD ME!
IF YOU HAVE NO OTHER BUSINESS HERE, WOULD YOU PLEASE LEAVE?

THANK YOU FOR COMING, EVERYONE.
PLEASE ENJOY YOURSELVES TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT THIS EVENING.
I'M NOT KNOWN AS A WICKED WOMAN FOR NOTHING!
I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE AND MORE BY THE TIME I'M DONE WITH HIM!
HMPH
CLANK
PRINCESS SANCIA.
CLING
YOU LOOK GLOOMY TONIGHT.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, PRINCESS?
WHEE!
SWEETS! DESSERT!
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO..
THAT'S RIGHT! THIS IS HOW THINGS ARE SUPPOSED TO GO!

NOW THEN..
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
SWIPE
PRINCESS.
AH...
Haaa.
SLAM
!!
ER...
BEST TO LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE.
WONDER WHAT THAT'S ALL ABOUT.
GRRR
WHAT A... ...HORRIBLE, DESPICABLE MAN! HE MAKES ME SO MAD!
HOW... HOW DARE HE SIMPLY IGNORE ME!

DASH
Let's settle this
!
!!!
HUH !?
Y...! YOU... LITTLE...
MASTER JUAN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WE'RE LEAV-ING!
ONCE I GET HOME, I'M HAVING MY FATHER ARREST THAT MAN!
FOOL!
THAT BASTARD SHOULD'VE THOUGHT BEFORE SPEAKING!
AND ACCUSED ME OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF MY FATHER'S POSITION TO THROW MY WEIGHT AROUND!
HE CALLED ME A BASTARD CHILD OF THE POPE.

CHATTER
STOP, DUKE OF GANDIA!
SHUT UP! QUIET!
H-H-H... HOW DARE YOU RIDICULE ME, YOU LOWLY SWINE!
CRASH
!?
WH... WHO DO YOU THINK I AM ANYWAY!?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO INSULTED ME FIRST!
HOW AWFUL! HE'S RUINING CARDINAL SFORZA'S BANQUET!
THE DUKE OF GANDIA'S AT IT AGAIN?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THEY SAY THERE'S A FIGHT LOOK!
EVERYONE'S SAYING IT! YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR FATHER'S AUTHORITY TO THROW YOUR WEIGHT AROUND!
AND YOU'RE NOTHING BUT THE DISGUSTING BASTARD CHILD OF A POPE!
Brother
THE DUKE OF GAN-DIA...
JUAN BORGIA.
HE'S CESARE'S LITTLE BOTHER...

SIGH~
PEDRO.
DID YOU FIND THE BOOK I SPECIFIED?
OH. YES SIR.
WHAT? DON'T SAY BRAZEN STUFF LIKE THAT. YOU'RE JUST A KID.
IS THERE A LOVELY LADY IN YOUR LIFE?
IT SOUNDED LOVE-SICK.
THAT WAS QUITE A SIGH.
OH. YOU THINK SO?
SIGNORI MICHE-LOTTO.

RUMOR HAS IT CESARE AND HIS BROTHER ARE ON VERY POOR TERMS.
... BRO-THER OF MINE.
EVEN IF JUST A LITTLE, I WAS HOPING I COULD SPEAK WITH YOU... ♡
!
YOU'RE JOFRE'S—
IT'S NOTHING TO GET UPSET OVER.
THEY'RE JUST JEALOUS OF YOUR GLORY.
I SEE ...
THIS MAN COULD BE OF USE TO ME...
clang
clang

IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE RETURNS HER FEELINGS.
SWISH
WHY DO I GET SO NERVOUS ABOUT DISCUSSING LUCREZIA WITH CESARE?
DISHEVEL
DID YOU TWO HAVE A FIGHT?
YOU'RE NORMALLY ON SUCH FRIENDLY TERMS.
I DUNNO
IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE EVEN REMEMBERS.
SWIRL
WH... WHY'D I RECALL THAT TIME OF ALL THINGS!?
THAT. THAT WAS JUST A PRANK HE PULLED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF WINE

HERE YOU GO...
?
CE...
PLEASE PUT IT...
...IN MY STUDY.
THP
?
?

WHEN IT COMES TO THE QUESTION OF JUST HOW MUCH MEN ARE CONTROLLED BY DESTINY...
...WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?
THAT'S CERTAINLY A BLUNT QUESTION.
BUT HONEST-LY ...THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU FOR QUITE SOME TIME.
IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT, SORCERER?
HEH HEH
YOU GOT ME. ARE YOU PSYCHIC?
ITS RULER RELIED FULLY ON DESTINY AND SO DID NOT BELIEVE IN CHANGING WITH THE TIMES. THAT LED TO ITS RUIN.
MY DEAR FLORENCE WAS LIKE THAT.
I'M SURE YOU'VE SEEN SUCH A THING HAPPEN YOURSELF.
A PROSPEROUS RULER CAN BECOME RUINED BY SHIFTING WINDS...
...THE FLOW OF FATE CAN ALSO BE ALTERED BY PURE HUMAN INTELLECT.
JUST AS ONE CAN CONSTRUCT PROPER EMBANKMENTS BEFORE THE RIVER OVER-FLOWS...

IT COULDN'T BE.

?
A STRANGE FELLOW INDEED
...THAT I'VE SEEN THE TRUTH I'VE BEEN SEEKING IN YOU.
I HAVE THE FEEL-ING...
YOU AN-SWERED ME WELL.
...HAS GIVEN ME THE CONFIDENCE TO ACT ON MY DESIRES.
HEARING YOUR WORDS ...
WOOOOOO
RUSTLE

IF I CAN'T BUILD THEM IN TIME...
...I CAN FORTIFY THEM AFTER-WARDS--WITH FORCE OF WILL.
DESTINY WILL THEN NATURALLY FOLLOW MY PATH.
BUT CAN ONE SUCH AS YOURSELF SUCCEED IN BUILDING THE EMBANK-MENTS YOU MENTIONED BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE?
SINCE YOU WERE A CHILD, YOU'VE PLAYED IN THE MUDDY STREAM THAT IS YOUR DESTINY, DETERMINED TO RESIST THE UNDER-TOW.
THAT'S A RATHER SIGNIFI-CANT ANSWER TO GIVE.
IF THAT IS SO, THEN WHAT OF YOU, SIGNORI CESARE?
SORCER-ER?

I HAD PLANNED TO PRETEND I WAS MERELY A SPECTATOR.
THIS IS A PERSONAL PROBLEM OF MINE.
UNTIL NOW, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT EXACTLY I WAS LOOKING FOR.
BUT ONLY RECENTLY...
...HAVE I COME TO REALIZE IT.
IN SUCCUMBING TO THE WILL OF DEMONS ...
...THAT MAN HAS BECOME A VALUABLE SUBJECT FOR ME

HUH ?
HISS
HISS
THIS PLACE ISN'T EXACTLY SAFE FOR ME.
IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT.
IT HAS RETURNED TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE. NOT A SIGN OF ASHES ANYWHERE.
HELLO? ANYBODY HOME?
IT'S AS THOUGH NOTHING EVER TOOK PLACE HERE.
THIS SERENITY IS DOWNRIGHT EERIE.

WHAT'S GOING ON?
WH--WHAT THE.?
MARCH
MARCH
WHAT'S THE MATTER, JUAN?
THE MAN WHO WAS RUDE TO YOU IS NOW BEHIND BARS.
YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR LESE MAJESTE* AGAINST HIS HOLINESS.
SO WHY THE LONG FACE?
MEN WITH POWER ARE ALWAYS THE SUBJECT OF ENVY.
YOU DON'T KNOW, FATHER.
IT'S NOT JUST HIM.
YOU WERE VICTORIOUS IN THE LAST BATTLE, REMEMBER? HAVE PRIDE IN YOURSELF AND--
YOU MUSTN'T GIVE HEED TO EACH AND EVERY LITTLE ACT AGAINST YOU.
I'M NOT A FOOL! I KNOW THAT MUCH!
EVERY-ONE IS LAUGHING AT ME FROM THE SHADOWS

*Translator's Note: "Lese majeste" means "to commit an offense against the dignity of the sovereign."

SAN-CIA!
Whoa!?
They've been at it for nearly an hour. And in such a busy hallway.
I'm gonna get a nosebleed
glance
EEK!
WH-- WHAT IS THIS LOOSE BEHAVIOR?
KEEP IN MIND WHERE YOU ARE!
ARE YOU ORDER-ING ME?

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO REALLY UNDER-STANDS ME.
EVEN THOUGH I'M DOING THE VERY BEST I CAN, NOBODY NOTICES.
ALL I GET ARE SNEERS FROM THE SHADOWS.
YOU POOR THING.
BUT YOU'VE GOT ME, DON'T YOU? NOW WIPE THOSE TEARS AWAY.
WHAT AN IDIOT. I HAVE NO INTEREST IN HIS PROBLEMS. WHAT A SPOILED BRAT.
AH...
NN!
HOOKING THIS FISH WILL BE EASY.

SAN-CIA?
WHAT'S THE MATTER ALL OF A SUDDEN?
OPEN THESE DOORS, SANCIA! I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE.
SLAM
YOU ..
... BRUTE
HMPH
BANG
SAN-CIA!
HEL-LOOO!

SCOOT SCOOT
...
WH-WH-WH-WHAT !?
JUAN ! I LOOOVE YOU!
WHAT GIVES!? HE'S COM-PLETELY IGNORING ME!
MM ...
MMMM!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS GUY!
SANCIA

AAH!
SLAP
YOU LYING BITCH!
THAT MAN ISN'T THE TYPE TO BE KEPT ON ANYONE'S LEASH.
IT'S SUCH AN ANNOY-ANCE!
HM. I WOULDN'T EXACTLY SAY I'M KEEPING COMPANY WITH HIM.
YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU'VE BEEN... KEEPING COMPANY... WITH CESARE AS WELL?
THEN... YOU...
OH STOP IT! NOBODY LIKES A DEPRESSING GUY!
IT'S ALL JUST A GAME ANYWAY! HOW COULD YOU THINK THAT I WAS SERIOUS ABOUT YOU?
I DON'T THINK ANYTHING OF YOU! I ONLY USED YOU TO PULL CESARE'S HEART-STRINGS!
YOU DECEIVED ME!
YOU PRETENDED YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO UNDERSTOOD ME!

WHAT'S THIS?
A LETTER TO ME?
HMM...
IT'S ANONYMOUS. THAT'S SUSPICIOUS.
THIS...
THIS CAN'T BE.
IT'S A LIE.
HUH?
WELL IF I'VE BEEN FOUND OUT, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT.

CESARE!!
!
EVEN THOUGH HE'S CURSED BY HELL...
...AND HARDLY AN ORDINARY PERSON...
...HE HAS EVERYTHING THAT I DON'T.

JUAN!
WAIT!
WHAT'RE YOU PLANNING TO DO!?
CESARE!
G...
GASP!
ANYONE I'VE EVER LOVED -- ALL OF THEM HAVE FAVORED HIM OVER ME!
THIS IS ALWAYS WHAT HAPPENS!
WHERE IS CESARE!?
I KNOW. I KNOW WHAT THEY ALL SAY ABOUT ME.
THE OLDER BROTHER, SO ACCOMPLISHED IN LITERARY AND MILITARY ARTS. WHILE HIS LITTLE BROTHER IS ONLY A. .
AND THAT'S WHY I DESPISE HIM!

RATTLE
RATTLE
PHEW

CLAAANG

COME NOW
SIGNORI JUAN.
CLATTER
IT'S THIS DEEP BOND THAT MAKES US HATE EACH OTHER SO.
WE'RE QUITE ALIKE.
THE TWO OF US COULD VERY WELL BE COMRADES

MASTER MICHE-LOTTO!
GRAS
IF YOU RESIST ...
...WE WILL HAVE TO RESORT TO RESTRAINTS
WHAT DID I DO?
UNDER AR-REST?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN I'M UNDER ARREST!?
JUST WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?
YOU'RE COMING WITH US
AN OFFICIAL INQUIRY WILL TAKE PLACE LATER, SO SAVE YOUR EXPLANATIONS FOR THEN
AN INFORMANT HAS GIVEN US RELIABLE INFORMA-TION.

MICHELE CORELLA.
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST, CHARGED WITH BEING A SPY FOR THE ANTI-PAPAL FACTION

ACCORDING TO THE GOSSIP OF THE COURT...
...THE ONES WHO TOOK CHIARO AWAY WERE SOLDIERS OF THE POPE.
I SEE.
SO HIS SEARCH IS THAT DESPERATE?
THIS IS INTER-ESTING.
TO THINK THAT CESARE COULD BE THAT ATTACHED TO SOME-ONE!
WHEN YOU CONSIDER WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO COMMAND THOSE SOLDIERS...
...THE POSSI-BILITIES BECOME QUITE NARROW.
A HA HA HA! THIS FEELS GREAT!
BUT, MASTER JUAN...
WHAT IF YOU'RE FOUND OUT?

CHIARO'S BEEN ARRESTED?
UNDER THE SUSPICION OF BEING A PART OF THE ANTI-PAPAL FACTION?
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD ANYTHING LIKE THIS.
WHERE COULD SUCH A RANDOM ACCUSA-TION COME FROM?
NO, I'VE SEARCHED HIGH AND LOW...
...BUT IT SEEMS HE HAS NOT BEEN IMPRISONED THERE.
THAT CAN ONLY MEAN THAT THE POPE WAS NOT INVOLVED WITH THIS INCIDENT.
!?
HOW CAN THAT BE!?
THEN . .
THIS SOUNDS MORE LIKE AN "ABDUCTION" THAN AN "ARREST."
...IS CHIARO BEING HELD AT SANT'ANGELO?
!

CHILL
A FAILURE!
AND WHICH ONE IS A FAILURE.
IT'S OBVIOUS WHICH SON HAS GREATER FAVOR.
HIS SON? YOU DON'T MEAN CARDINAL CESARE!
Ha ha ha
DID YOU HEAR?
ABOUT THE CARDINAL'S COUNCIL THAT TOOK PLACE?
@hi5per
LOOKS LIKE NEPOTISM IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE BORGIA FAMILY
IN EXCHANGE FOR GRANTING THE RIGHT OF SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE OF NAPLES, LAND IN BENEVENTO WAS HANDED OVER.
BENEVENTO... THAT'S A VITAL POINT IN THE EASTERN REGION OF NAPLES, YOU KNOW.
THEY SAY THAT IT'S NOT UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE POPE BUT RATHER HAS BEEN GIVEN OVER TO HIS SON.
THIS TIME I'M CERTAIN I'LL PUT AN END TO CESARE'S LIFE!
I WON'T BE FOUND OUT.
THIS WILL BE OVER LONG BEFORE THERE'S ANY RISK OF EXPOSURE.
THIS TIME...!

AH...
AAAAAH!
SNAP
YIKES!

!
MONSTER.
ha ha ha ha!
NOT A CHANCE!
MONSTER!
DO YOU THINK THE POPE WOULD MAKE A MISTAKE LIKE THAT?
IT'LL MEAN TROUBLE FOR NAPLES!
IF SIGNORI JUAN GAINS THE POSITION OF NAPLES' SENIOR STATESMAN..
DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH THOSE EYES!
YOU MONSTER!
SHIMMING

BYE!
THP
THP
AND EVERY TIME HE DOES, I REALIZE ONCE AGAIN...
THAT'S RIGHT... HE'S ALWAYS STANDING IN MY WAY.
...THAT SOMEWHERE IN MY HEART I KNOW I'M NO MATCH FOR HIM...
I'M AFRAID OF HIM.

AH ...!
YOU SHOULDN'T SPEAK IN SUCH A LOUD VOICE WHEN GOSSIPING.
ACCIDENTS YOU'D NEVER EXPECT COULD HAPPEN...
AND IT CAN BE SUCH A BOTHER.
HOW ABOUT FORGIVING THEM JUST THIS ONCE, JUAN?

HMM ...
WHAT, NO MEAL?
COME OUT, SIGNORI MICHELOTTO.
YOU WILL NOW BE QUESTIONED.
WHAT KIND OF TREATMENT IS THIS?
!
ALSO ...
...IF YOU RESIST, YOUR MASTER CESARE BORGIA MAY HAVE SUSPICION CAST UPON HIM.
WE'VE HEARD YOU'RE SKILLED IN MILITARY ARTS.
WE DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH ANY OUTBURSTS.
YOUR HANDS, PLEASE
WAIT A MINUTE! WHY DO I HAVE TO WEAR HANDCUFFS?
FROM THE START, YOU'VE BEEN TREATING ME LIKE A PRISONER ALREADY CONDEMNED

I HAVE TO FINISH THIS SOON.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I TRY TO AVOID IT, I KNOW IT'S TRUE. THOSE ARE DEMON'S EYES. THEY HOLD NO EMOTION BUT MALICE.
I MUST KILL HIM BEFORE HE KILLS ME!
JUAN.
!
MASTER JUAN!
JUST GO AND READY MY HORSE.
I WANT TO SEE MICHELOTTO'S TEARFUL FACE IMMEDIATELY
NO.
IT'S NOTHING.
IS ANYTHING THE MATTER?

IT'S JUAN BORGIA.
I DO BELIEVE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE SPOKEN.
I HOPE IT'S OKAY IF I CALL YOU MICHELOTTO.
WELL THEN.
GOOD WORK.
CREAK
HERE HE IS, SIR.
I SEE. SO HE'S BEHIND THIS.
I MUST THANK YOU FOR EARLIER.
THAT FRIGHTFUL ORDEAL ENDED WITHOUT ME KILLING MY DEAR BROTHER.

KLICK
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! WHAT COULD HE POSSIBLY GAIN BY JOINING THE ANTI-PAPAL FACTION!?
THAT WE COULD FIND OUT AFTER SOME INVESTIGATING.
NOW COOPERATE AND PUT OUT YOUR HANDS -- OR ELSE...
...I'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED SOMETHING LIKE THIS, SO HOW WOULD I KNOW?
I DON'T THINK I'M BUILT TO RESIST EXTREME TORTURE, BUT...

BANG
WHAM
DAMN...
IF ONLY MY HANDS WERE FREE...
YANK
HA!
YOU'RE A SICK LITTLE BRAT, YOU KNOW THAT?
...MAKES ME WANT TO RIP OFF THAT MASK EVEN MORE.
ALL THIS FUTILE STRUGGLING...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP IT!
NO!
DON'T TOUCH ME!
I JUST WANT TO SEE THE FACE BEHIND THAT MASK!
THEY SAY YOU'VE GOT QUITE A SCAR UNDERNEATH!
YES SIR.
YOU, CESARE'S BOOT-LICKER!
GRIP
ALL THANKS TO YOUR OH-SO-THOUGHTFUL INTRUSION!
GUARDS!
REMIND HIM WHO'S BOSS AROUND HERE!
SLUG

I REMEMBER THIS FACE.
THE FIRST TIME I SAW IT WAS WHEN YOU WERE WITH LUCREZIA.
AND THE SECOND TIME...
...WAS AT THE CASTLE OF PRINCE DJEM.
THEY SAY THAT PRINCE DJEM DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES WHEN HE WAS MADE A PRISONER OF WAR.
BUT THERE'S ALSO A RUMOR THAT HE WAS POISONED.
HIS DEATH WAS...
...IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MY BROTHER CESARE'S *ASSISTED* ESCAPE THANKS TO A CERTAIN *SOMEONE*...

YOU ARE ..!
!?
YES. WELL ..
I'VE ALWAYS HAD A TASTE FOR HORROR. ♡
YOU ...
YOU TOLD EVERY-ONE YOU HAD AWFUL SCARS. YOU'RE A REAL IMPOSTER, AREN'T YOU?

HOW...
HOW DARE YOU!
ERGH!
HA!
BASH
HANG HIM!
HANG HIM ON THE RACK!
STRIKE HIM AGAIN AND AGAIN UNTIL EVERY INCH OF HIS FLESH IS TORN!

SLAP!
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO KILLED PRINCE DJEM?
IT WAS YOU, WASN'T IT! YOU HENCHMAN OF CESARE'S!
I LOOKED UP TO THAT BEAUTIFUL AND KIND MAN. HE WAS SO MUCH LIKE AN ANGEL.
YOU KNOW ...
STOMP
SAY IT!
COME ON, CAN'T YOU SAY IT!?
GRIND
GRIND

SLASH
HE'S A STUBBORN ONE ALL RIGHT.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE'S GOING TO CONFESS ANYTHING. HE HASN'T SCREAMED EVEN ONCE.
NO, HE'S JUST UNCON-SCIOUS.
IS HE DEAD?
WHOA!
SLIP
!
SPLAT
WHY DON'T YOU JUST HURRY UP AND CONFESS IT?
THOUGH IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'LL BE LEFT ALIVE TO RETURN HOME ANYWAY.
WHIP
WHIP

TA
JUMP
IS THAT THE SOUND OF HOOVES? AT SUCH AN HOUR ...
THERE IS...
...NO WAY I WILL EVER FORGIVE HIM.
THIS IS JUST TO GIVE HIM A TASTE OF HIS OWN MEDICINE
ANYTHING I TRULY DESIRE, HE STEALS AWAY FROM ME.
IT'S CESARE!

FEEL FREE TO USE ALL THE TORTURE DEVICES IN THIS ROOM.
I... COME BACK TO SEE HOW HE'S PROGRESSING LATER.
I DON'T CARE WHAT IT TAKES. YOU HAVE TO MAKE HIM CONFESS.
THE STENCH OF BLOOD IN THIS ROOM IS GOING TO MAKE ME VOMIT.
Heh.
A CORPSE IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN IT'S HORRIBLY MUTILATED.
YES MASTER JUAN.
THEN WE'LL HAVE HIM DELIVERED TO CESARE'S PLACE.
ALL FINGERS POINT TO CESARE.
THERE'S NO DOUBT THIS MAN WAS INVOLVED WITH PRINCE DJEM'S DEATH. HE MAY HAVE COMMITTED THE ACT, BUT THE ONE WHO ORDERED IT...
AS ALWAYS.

CHIARO!
CHIARO, WAKE UP!
I'M GOING TO UNTIE YOU NOW
!
DOES THIS MEAN HE'S ALREADY FOUND ME OUT?
BWAM!
CHIARO!

WHY ...
WHY DID THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN?
WE WERE JUST FOLLOW-ING ORDERS.
PLEASE CALM DOWN.
WE'RE ONLY LOWLY ...
FLASH
AH-

CHIARO'S... NOT BREATH-ING...
EVEN THOUGH I'VE FREED HIM..
CESARE, WHAT ARE YOU...?
CHI.. A...
!
HE'S NOT BREATHING?
CALM DOWN.
LEAVE HIM TO ME.
CHIARO!
OPEN YOUR EYES! OPEN YOUR EYES, CHIARO!

UH
AAH!
AAAH!
twirl
HOW BORING.
TO THINK THAT HUMANS ARE SO FRAGILE!
BORING...

HE'S A MONSTER!
GOLDEN EYES!
DEAR GOD!
JUST AS YOU DID TO HIM...
NO! TEN TIMES WORSE THAN WHAT YOU DID TO HIM, I WILL MAKE YOU SUFFER!
hh
RUSH

FLUTTER
THIS TIME, COME.
MY LOVELY CESARE.
COME NOW. LET THESE GENTLE ARMS EMBRACE YOUR WEARY BODY.
YOU HAVE BEEN ELECTED THE TYRANT OF DARKNESS.
COME WITH ME.

SPLASH
THEY CRUMBLED...
...SO EASILY.
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW...
YOU NEEDN'T SUFFER ANYMORE.

!
CHIA-RO!
ARE YOU AWAKE ?
DON'T... GO TO HER!
COME NOW... CESARE...
WAIT !
YOU MUSTN'T MOVE YOUR BODY!

THE ONE WHO HELD YOU TO THIS EARTH...
...IS NO LONGER.
N... NO...
N...
YOU MUSTN'T... LISTEN TO WHAT THAT... DEMON SAYS...

AAH!
HE'S... ALIVE!?
!
FOOOO
CHI... ARO?

NO! COME BACK!

AM I... TOO LATE... !?

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING IN THAT STATE!?
!
WHAT WAS THAT TREMOR JUST NOW?
YOU'LL DIE!
CHIA-RO!
WAIT!
!?
WHAT IS THIS ...?

CHIARO, THAT DEMON WAS—
NG
!

HOW DO YOUR WOUNDS FEEL?
WHERE AM I?

A HA HA HA HA
SNEER
MASTER CESARE!

YESTERDAY AT THE CORONATION CEREMONY HELD IN NAPLES FOR THE KING...
...MASTER CESARE WAS APPOINTED TO ACT AS THE POPE'S REPRESENTATIVE.
!
!?
EVEN IF I'M TOLD HE'S POSSESSED BY EVIL.

THEY SAY IT WAS JUST A RUMOR.
VANOZZA'S MANSION?
BUT IT WAS COMPLETELY BURNED DOWN...
THEN CESARE CAME BACK!?
HAVE YOU SEEN HIM, VOLPE!?
NO.
HE'S STAYING AT VANOZZA'S MANSION, SO I'M UNABLE TO CONTACT HIM.

YOU WERE ASLEEP FOR THREE DAYS.
THE CHARGES AGAINST YOU HAVEN'T CLEARED UP YET SO...
...I DECIDED IT WOULD BE BEST TO HIDE YOU IN THIS MANSION WHILE YOU HEAL.
SO THIS IS YOUR...?
I'M SORRY.
LISTEN...
VOLPE?
HE DIDN'T ASK FOR HIS UNIQUE POWER...
I JUST... WANT YOU... TO KNOW THAT MUCH.
HOW MANY YEARS DO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN BY HIS SIDE?
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, MY LOYALTY TO HIM WILL NOT CHANGE.

HEH.
LOOKS LIKE I ALSO PLAYED A ROLE IN THIS.
HMPH.
THROUGH HER FORM THEY CAN SEDUCE CESARE TO THEIR SIDE.
creak
THAT ...
...IS ALL PART OF THEIR PLAN.
CHIARO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING...
...IN THAT STATE !?
!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS? I'M GOING TO RESCUE CESARE.

!
I KNOW ...
...THAT SIGNORA VANOZZA IS DEAD BUT EVEN SO, SHE WALKS AMONG US ONCE AGAIN.
CHIARO, IF ANY-ONE CAN EXPLAIN ALL THIS, IT'S YOU.
THE DEMON WHO TOOK CESARE AWAY... THAT FACE WAS...
JUST ...
...WHAT IS GOING ON?
AS YOU MAY WELL HAVE GUESSED, A DEMON HAS POSSESSED VANOZZA.
OR MORE PRECISELY, HER BODY'S BEING USED AS A VESSEL.
THE SOUL OF THE WOMAN YOU ONCE KNEW IS NO LONGER IN THERE.
BUT WHY SIGNORA VANOZZA'S BODY OF ALL PEOPLE?
HOW TO EVEN BEGIN...
OF ALL THINGS ...!

ERGH ...
I TOLD YOU NOT TO PUSH YOURSELF IN YOUR CONDITION.
DON'T BLAME ME IF YOU DIE. YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW.
ARE YOU REALLY...
...IN SUCH A PLACE, CESARE?
THE SINISTER "ENERGY"...
THE HORSES SENSE IT TOO.
...ENVELOPING THAT MANSION.

WHOA, GIRL.
WHOA.
WHINNY
THE HORSES REFUSE TO GO ANY FURTHER.
SOMETHING'S UP.
WOOOOO

BINGO.
THAT VOICE... IS IT YOU, NICCOLO !?
IT IS YOU!
HEH HEH HEH. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH I'D LOVE TO BE ABLE TO.
HOWEVER. I'M IN A BIT OF A SPOT...
WHO'S THERE !?
SHOW YOURSELF!
JUST FOLLOW THE SOUND OF MY VOICE. I HAVE AN ESCAPE ROUTE FOR YOU TWO.
DEMONIC FORCES HAVE TRAPPED YOU IN A DIMENSION THAT THEY CONTROL.
QUICKLY NOW.
BEFORE THEY NOTICE.
WHAT IS THIS? THERE'S NOTHING EXTRA-ORDINARY ABOUT THIS PATH .
SHOULD WE TRUST HIM?
GUESS SO
I SHOULD WARN YOU, HE IS A MOTH.

WHAT IS IT, VOLPE?
NOTHING. IT'S JUST... THIS PATH SEEMS FAMILIAR..
IF YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH ENERGY TO MOUTH OFF, THEN I SUPPOSE YOU'RE ABLE ENOUGH
!?
YEAH?
IT'S NOT LIKE I ASKED YOU TO COME WITH ME.
THIS IS WHERE WE LEFT THE HORSES.
DOES THAT MEAN WE JUST WENT IN A CIRCLE?
HOW ...?
WE'RE SO CLOSE WE CAN SEE THE MANSION ...
NO ORDINARY PATH WILL ALLOW YOU ENTRY INTO THIS PLACE.

MY, IN THE SHORT TIME SINCE WE LAST MET...
..YOU'VE GOTTEN QUITE BANGED UP, HAVEN'T YOU CHIARO?
SHUT UP.
OR I'LL BURY YOU AGAIN.
I JUST FIGURED I'D DO A LITTLE INVESTIGATION ON THE ENEMY'S TURF.
BUT I WAS AMBUSHED--HENCE HOW YOU FOUND ME.
PHEW! I'M SAVED.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING?

I DIS-TINCTLY FELT HIS AURA AROUND HERE.
YES. THOUGH I CAN'T SAY I'VE SEEN HIM FOR MYSELF, BEING TRAPPED AND ALL...
SO THEN ...
MASTER CESARE REALLY IS WITHIN THIS PALACE?

!
I-IMPOS-SIBLE! HOW DID WE SUDDENLY END UP HERE!?
AND RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MANSION NO LESS!
IT'S EXACTLY AS IT WAS BEFORE THE ATTACK.
I TOLD YOU. THE DEMONS HAVE SET UP A PARALLEL DIMENSION IN THIS PLACE.
?
IS YOUR VOICE COMING FROM DOWN THERE?
YES, RIGHT HERE. WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO REMOVE THIS RUBBLE?

Pass
WAI—
I...
IF YOU HAVE, THEN I...
HAVE YOU LOST YOURSELF ONCE AND FOR ALL?

DAMMIT! HOW CAN I BE EXPECTED TO FIND HIM WITHOUT ANY KIND OF A LEAD?
THAT IS THE ONE THING I CANNOT SAY FOR SURE.
WHAT IS CERTAIN IS THAT HE IS SOMEWHERE IN THIS MANSION. LET'S SPLIT UP AND FIND HIM.
CE-SARE
HASN'T BEEN COM-PLETELY TAKEN OVER BY THE DARKNESS YET, HAS HE!?
THAT TIME... THE SCENE OF HIM GIVING HIS BODY OVER TO THE EVIL WAS PLAYED OUT AS THOUGH I WAS WITNESSING THE WHOLE THING WITH MY VERY EYES.
SO WHY CAN'T I FEEL A FLICKER OF AN AURA FROM HIM NOW?
CESARE!
AM I... TOO LATE?
WHERE ARE YOU, CESARE!?

CESARE!
THE GOLDEN EYES...

CAW!
CAW
WAH! WHAT THE--!?
THRASH
DAMN! MOVE!
CAW
CAW

CHIARO!
WHAT HAPPENED !?
!

SHUUUU
!

SAY...
...SOMETHING, CESARE!
DON'T YOU KNOW ME?
TO KILL YOU NOW, SO THAT YOU MIGHT DIE AS A MAN RATHER THAN LIVE AS A DEMON?

WHAT'RE YOU DOING, CHIARO?
TURNING YOUR SWORD UPON YOUR OWN MASTER... ARE YOU THINKING STRAIGHT!?
...MUST FULFILL MY PROMISE TO YOU?
THE TIME THAT I... IS NOW ...

!
!

!
THUD
THUD
THUD
WAAH
UH!

THIS WICKED UNION,
SOMEHOW...
...THIS EVIL HOLDS A GREAT BEAUTY...
IS IT PERHAPS THE TRUE EMBODIMENT OF CESARE'S TYRANNICAL POTENTIAL?
THE FORM THAT WILL GIVE HIM ENOUGH POWER TO REVOLUTIONIZE THE WORLD?

CHIA-RO!
CESARE...
FWIP!
MASTER CESARE!

YOU THINK THAT WOULD FOOL HIM?
HE'LL HAVE HIS REVENGE NO MATTER WHAT!
HE'S GOING TO KILL ME!
BUT ...
.IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT YOU WILL ACCOMPANY MASTER CESARE TO THE CORONATION CEREMONY FOR THE KING OF NAPLES.
FOR THAT REASON .
.WON'T YOU CONSIDER SIMPLY ACTING OBLIVIOUS TO THE WHOLE SITUATION?
THEY ALL SAID IT COULD ONLY BE THE WORK OF A DEMON!
THOSE COLD, CALCULATING EYES SEARCHING FOR A WEAK SPOT TO SINK HIS TEETH INTO SO THAT HE CAN BREAK MY NECK!
I KNOW HIS EYES...LIKE A PREDATOR WATCHING HIS PREY.
MASTER JUAN?
I... I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!

NO!
HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO GO TO SUCH A BANQUET?
BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO!
I SAW HIM! HE CAME HIMSELF TO RESCUE THAT MICHELOTTO!
THERE'S NO DOUBT HE'LL BE COMING TOO!
THAT DAMN CESARE!
WHAT I'VE DONE WILL BE EXPOSED!
IT'S BEING HELD BY YOUR LOVING MOTHER. AS HER SON, HOW CAN YOU REFUSE TO GO?
BUT MASTER ...
BUT EVERY ONE...
...OF MY ENVOYS HAS COME BACK WITH A PALE FACE AND UN-CONTROLLABLE SHAKING .
I HAVEN'T SEEN...
...JUST WHAT KIND OF DEATH THE MEN IN CHARGE OF THE TORTURE WERE GIVEN

I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
ALONE.
WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE ACTING AWFULLY STRANGE.
JUST HURRY UP AND SAY—
WE'RE GOING TO KILL CESARE.
Y...YOU FOOL.
YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR HIM.
AND YOU'RE HIS BROTHER, REMEMBER? YOU SHOULD TONE YOUR JOKES DOWN...

OUCH!
BE MORE CARE-FUL!
F...
FORGIVE ME, PRIN-CESS.
!
READY SEVERAL SKILLED ASSASSINS FOR ME.
THE PLAN WILL BE CARRIED OUT FOLLOW-ING THE BANQUET.
Eek
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHAT A RUDE MAN. SNEAKING INTO A GIRL'S ROOM BEFORE GIVING HER A CHANCE TO TURN YOU DOWN.

ONLY THEN...
...WILL YOU BE MINE.

IF I WIN AGAINST CESARE...
THIS ISN'T A JOKE.
IF I SUCCEED, YOU'LL FINALLY FIND ME WORTHY, WON'T YOU?
IF YOU CAN.
HEH
I'LL SHOW YOU, SANCIA.
I'LL STAIN THE EARTH WITH HIS BLOOD.

VANOZZA'S PRIVATE BANQUET IS BEING HELD IN HER MANSION TODAY.
CESARE WILL BE THERE!
THAT'S WHY YOU WON'T BE.
DO YOU REALLY EXPECT ME TO ALLOW YOU TO GO, CHIARO?
YOU TURNED YOUR SWORD ON HIM.
THERE'S NO REASON WHY I SHOULD ALLOW YOU TO COME NEAR HIM AGAIN.

THE BANQUET'S BEGUN.
A FEAST OVERSHADOWED BY EVERY DARK EMOTION.
CONSIDERING YOUR PHYSICAL CONDITION...
...ISN'T IT GLARINGLY OBVIOUS?
VOLPE!
WHY THE HELL SHOULD I!?
PLEASE CALM DOWN, SIGNORI CHIARO.
OUR MASTER HAS ORDERED YOU TO REMAIN HERE FOR A WHILE.
MOVE IT!
WHAT IS THIS? YOU'RE LOCKING ME IN HERE?

BUT NOBODY CAN TELL WHO I AM.
I FEEL SO AWKWARD ACCOMPANYING JUAN LIKE THIS.
YOU'RE LOOKING AS LOVELY AS EVER, MOTHER.
IT'S JUST A MODEST LITTLE FEAST...
...BUT PLEASE ENJOY YOURSELVES TODAY.

DAM-MIT!
STOP!
VOLPE!
WAIT!
VOLPE!
I'M SORRY, CHIARO, BUT IF YOU CAN'T SEE THE TRUE VALUE IN HIM THEN...
THEN YOU CAN BE NOTHING MORE THAN A HINDRANCE!
WHAT HE REALLY NEEDS IS MORE—

HE LOOKS JUST LIKE AN ANGEL RIGHT NOW. SUCH A STUNNING MAN.
And yet completely rotted on the inside
IS IT...
...ALL RIGHT TO SIT HERE, BROTHER?

SURE.
GO RIGHT AHEAD, JUAN.
CALM DOWN, MY HEART! CALM DOWN. HE'LL GET SUSPICIOUS.

!

DOES HE KNOW?
!
TOMORROW IS NAPLES, ISN'T IT?
LET US PRAY LUCK IS ON OUR SIDE.

sprinkle.
NOW!
!

THERE'S NO DOUBT CESARE IS AT THE BANQUET RIGHT NOW. I NEED TO BE THERE!
TO SEE IF HE'S BEEN TAKEN OVER.
BUT...
RATTLE
RATTLE
IF I SEE THAT HE HAS, WILL I REALLY BE ABLE TO STRIKE HIM DEAD?
CHILL
WITH MY VERY OWN HANDS!?

THIS IS THE END, CESARE!
WHAT DID THEY INTEND TO USE THIS ROOM FOR, EXACTLY?
SOME-ONE VERY CAUTIOUS INSTALLED THE BARS ON THESE WINDOWS.
VOLPE, YOU SCOUN-DREL...
DAMMIT!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY TOOK ALL MY WEAPONS!

NICCO-LO! HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?
THAT'S SOME SERIOUS INTERNAL CONFLICT YOU'VE GOT THERE.
WHAT WILL YOU DO, CHIARO?
I CAN HELP YOU ESCAPE FROM THIS PLACE.
BUT THEN WHAT WILL YOU DO?
YOU MAY...
...BE FORCED TO KILL HIM WITH YOUR OWN HANDS, JUST AS YOU FEAR...
...BECAUSE YOUR TENDER HEART HAS PROMISED IT.

EVEN THEN I COULDN'T RAISE MY SWORD AGAINST HIM...
...SO WILL I BE UNABLE TO DO IT NOW, EVEN IF IT'S FOR HIS OWN GOOD?
CLANG
COME ...
... CHIARO !

I'M GOING TO LET YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WANTED.
AFTER ALL, THE ONLY ONE I HAVE NOW...IS YOU...
WE MET WHEN WE WERE BUT CHILDREN...
IS AN ASSASSIN WHO ONLY WISHED FOR FREEDOM...
AND HE A LONELY BOY WHO WISHED FOR NOTHING BUT DEATH

AH HA HA HA HA!
AH HA HA HA HA!
WHAT IS THIS !?
CHIA-RO!
!
NO! DON'T RIDE THAT WAY!
WHOA!
AH!
HUH?

IF MASTER VOLPE FINDS OUT, WE'RE DOOMED!
CHIA-RO'S GONE ?
THAT LITTLE--! FIND HIM!
FIND HIM! FIND HIM!
HE COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR!
THE HORSES !
ONE OF THE HORSES IS MISSING!
WHAT !
WATCH OUT. THE AURA OF EVIL HERE IS THICKER THAN THE MIST THAT ENCASES IT.
IT SEEMS AS THOUGH...
...WHATEVER LIES BEYOND KNOWS WHAT WE INTEND TO DO.
WATCH OUT?
FOR WHAT?

WHAT THE...? IT'S PITCH BLACK.
SHIT.
WHAT JUST HAPPENED THERE?
I CAN'T SEE A THING.
N.CCO-LO!
NICCOLO!
WHERE'D YOU GO?
!

-ORO-
GWOOOOSH
WHINNY
UGH
WAH!

!?
CRACK
CRACK
BURST
WH-WH-WH-WHAT THE--!
WAAAAH!

!?
TH... THIS IS...
WOOOOO
VANOZZA!

BOOM
THIS IS NO JOKE!
DIE.
DIE!
IT REALLY INTENDS TO KILL ME.
DIE!
CRASH
!

AAH!
!
SHIT!
DIE.
DIE.
DIE.
EVEN THOUGH IT TOOK ON VANOZZA'S FORM, IT'S THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF HER.
THIS THING IS A VILE MASS OF EVIL.
WOOOOO

!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO REST?
YES.
FOR SOME REASON, I SUDDENLY FEEL VERY TIRED.
I THINK I'LL DO AS YOU SUGGEST.
EVERY-ONE, PLEASE CONTINUE TO ENJOY YOUR-SELVES.
MO-THER.

FLAA'ASH
THE DARKNESS... IT'S BREAKING UP!
chatter
IS SOME-THING THE MATTER?
MADAME VANOZ-ZA?
YOU LOOK PALE.
This is a familiar pattern.
OW.
WHUMP

VERY SOON...
...SAN-CIA.
I WONDER IF MADAM VANOZZA IS FEELING ALL RIGHT.
I WISH I COULD SAY A PROPER GOOD-BYE. .
...BUT I SUPPOSE IT'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL NEXT TIME.
IN-DEED.
THAT WAS A MOST SPLENDID BANQUET.

SHALL I ESCORT YOU TO YOUR ROOM?
RUSTLE
WELL...
...I SUPPOSE WE'LL BE LEAVING TOO, THEN.
CLATTER
N-NO.
I'LL BE FINE. YOU'RE MY GUEST OF HONOR, SO PLEASE ENJOY YOURSELF.

DRAW
SO YOU ESCAPED FROM YOUR PRISON.
IT SEEMS I UNDERESTIMATED YOU, CHIARO.
YOU ARE A THREAT. I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU NEAR CESARE.
OUT OF MY WAY, VOLPE.
...IT WILL MAKE HIM AN INFALLIBLE RULER.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO KEEP THAT FROM HIM!
I PROMISED HIM THAT.
I HAVE TO KILL HIM.
IF MASTER CESARE...
...IS NOW UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE DARKNESS ...

!
THE SHADOWS AROUND HIM...ARE BLACKER THAN EVER BEFORE.
NOW THAT I SEE HIM AGAIN, HIS TRANSFORMATION SEEMS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR.
... I SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON FOLLOWING HIM.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT JUST HAPPENED BUT FOR NOW...
VOLPE.

QUIET!
IF THE DEMONS WOULD ONLY GRANT HIM CONTROL, HE WOULD WELCOME THEM!
IF HE BECOMES ONE WITH THE DEMONS OF HELL, HE WILL NO LONGER BE THE MAN YOU KNOW!
IF YOU REALLY SEE POTENTIAL IN HIS ANGELIC FACE, HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH A THING?
DON'T TRY TO GET IN THE WAY OF HIS MATURATION!
I...
...DON'T GET YOU!
LEAVE HERE AND NEVER RETURN! IF YOU DON'T, I'LL KILL YOU RIGHT NOW!
I WON'T ALLOW YOU BY HIS SIDE ANY MORE!

I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE HE WAS A MERE CHILD.
THOUGH HE HAS THE FACE OF AN ANGEL, HE'S SUFFERED NOTHING BUT MISFORTUNE HIS WHOLE LIFE.
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING, VOLPE?
IT IS BECAUSE HE BEARS A POWER WITHOUT EQUAL THAT I WISH TO SEE HIM FLOURISH.
WHO ARE YOU TO DECLARE HIM UNWORTHY OF SUCH POWER?
!
ARE YOU SAYING...
...THAT HIS HUMANITY IS WORTH SACRIFICING JUST FOR POWER?
THRUST

I'LL RETURN AFTER I GET A LITTLE MORE OF THIS NIGHT AIR.
YOU CAN GO ON HOME.
BUT ROME CAN BE A DANGEROUS PLACE AT NIGHT.
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
WELL, BROTHER, THIS IS WHERE WE PART ...

Ha!
NICE THREAT.
FROM NOW ON, THE NAME OF "MICHELOTTO" ...
.. WILL NO LONGER BE YOURS. IT WILL BE *MINE.*
YOU WANT TO KILL *ME? THE* MICHE-LOTTO?
STOP IT!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHY YOU CAME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING!?
!
THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE CROSSING SWORDS.
IF YOU WASTE ANY MORE TIME, WE'LL BE TOO LATE!

CESARE DRANK THE WINE THAT CONTAINED MY POISON.
IT SHOULD START AFFECTING HIM ANY MINUTE NOW.
HE MAY BE KNOWN AS A MASTER OF THE SWORD, BUT IN HIS CURRENT CONDITION, THE ASSASSINS WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE TAKING HIM DOWN.
THEN YOU MEAN, YOU'RE JUST GOING TO WAIT HERE?
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WOULD STAIN THE EARTH WITH HIS BLOOD.
DIRTYING ONE'S OWN HANDS WITH BLOOD IS UNBECOMING OF AN ARISTOCRAT.
I'LL LEAVE IT TO THE ASSASSINS.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
SANCIA...
THAT ATTITUDE OF YOURS IS EXACTLY WHY YOU'LL NEVER BE CESARE'S EQUAL!

ALL RIGHT.
TAKE CARE.
GO NOW.
JUAN?
WHY'D YOU EXCUSE HIM?
YES SIR.
TO IMPLEMENT THE INSTRUCTIONS I GAVE HIM EARLIER.
HE'S GONE TO INFORM THE ASSASSINS.

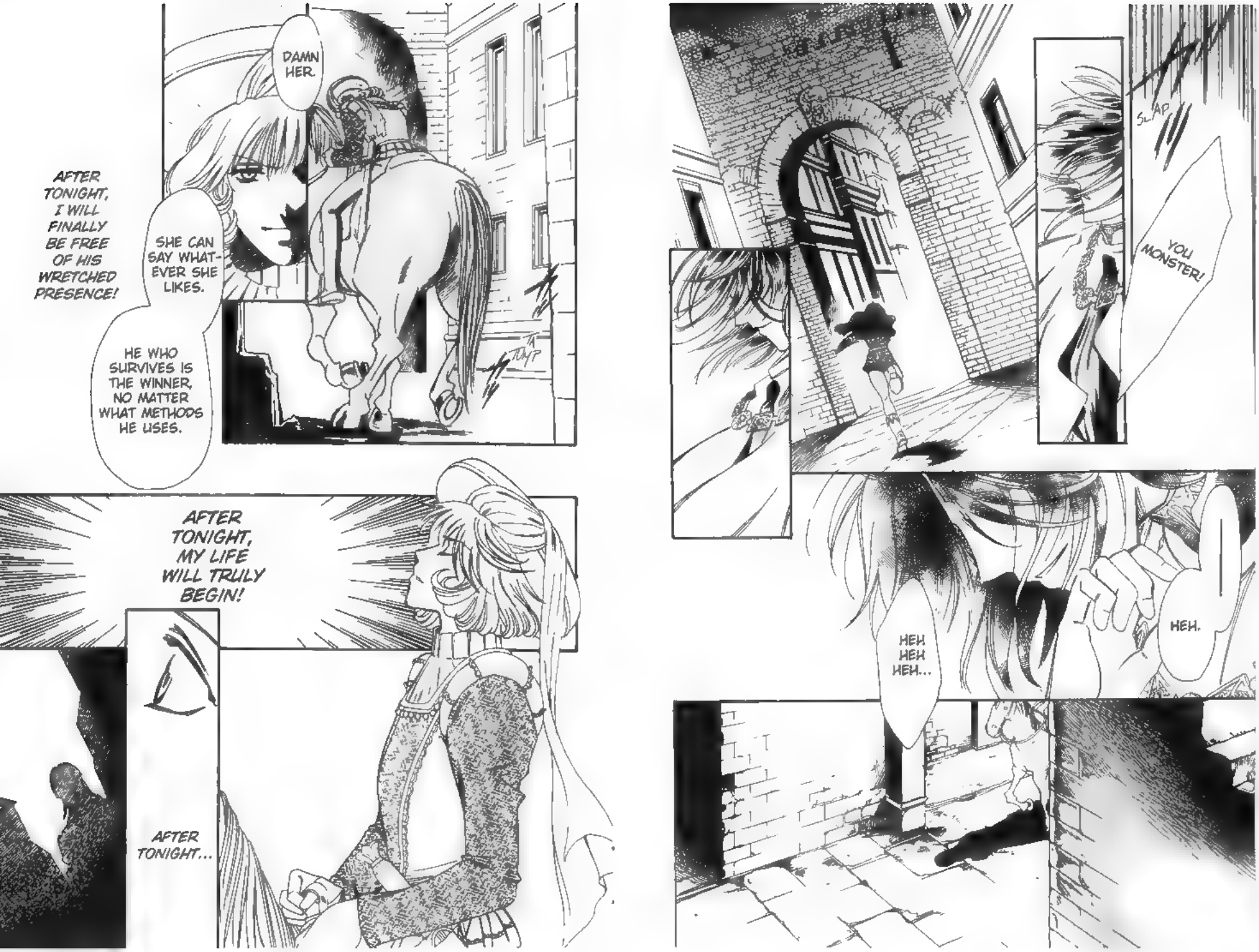
SIG-NORE CESARE!
PREPARE YOUR-SELF!
PUSH
WHAT WAS THAT?
CES--
!

DON'T FOLLOW ME.
SAN-CIA!
WAIT!
WHAT'S SO WRONG WITH ME?
THE STREETS ARE DANGEROUS AT NIGHT!
A SHAME.
JUST WHEN I'D DECIDED TO GIVE YOU ANOTHER CHANCE.
I KNEW IT. EVEN IF HE'S A BRUTE, I'D TAKE CESARE OVER THIS SPOILED BRAT ANY DAY.
IF ONLY I KNEW WHO THE ASSASSINS WERE -- THEN WE COULD RUN OFF TOGETHER!
IT'S TOO BAD HE'S GOING TO BE KILLED OFF.
STEP

HEH ...
SQUEEZE
P...
PLEASE SAVE ME...
!?
DRIP
SLIP
OW!
WHAT WAS THAT?
AH!
AAAAAH!
FLAP

WHY ?
DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOU LOVED ME?
STOP IT!
NNG!
NNNN...
WHEN YOU...
...LET ME CARESS THAT SUPPLE BODY OF YOURS.
OH...
AH!
YOU...

FLICK
WHY...
...ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?
AAH!
SLASH
OUCH!
LET ME GO!


DAMN HER.
SHE CAN SAY WHATEVER SHE LIKES.
HE WHO SURVIVES IS THE WINNER, NO MATTER WHAT METHODS HE USES.
AFTER TONIGHT, I WILL FINALLY BE FREE OF HIS WRETCHED PRESENCE!
AFTER TONIGHT, MY LIFE WILL TRULY BEGIN!
AFTER TONIGHT...
SLAP
YOU MONSTER!
HEH HEH HEH...
HEH.

WAH!

N...
NO! STAY AWAY!
W...
WAAAH!
STAY AWAY!
THP

Y-YOU!
YOU'RE ALIVE? H-HOW CAN THAT BE!?
AT THE BANQUET, I WAS SURE I...
GASP
!
POISON DOESN'T WORK ON ME.
FOOLISH JUAN.
AA...
AAAAAAH!

...DIE, MY BROTHER!
SO...

PLEASE DON'T KILL ME.
SLUMP
FORGIVE ME.
A-AREN'T WE BROTHERS?
I KNOW I DID WRONG.
I CAN'T WIN AGAINST YOU, BROTHER.
I WAS JEALOUS AND DID BAD THINGS...
SO...

WAAH!
WHY YOU--!
GYAAH!
SLASH
EEE!
ARE YOU RUN-NING AWAY !?
STOP!
VOLPE.

HA HA HA!
AH HA...
I...I DID IT. I... DEFEATED CESARE.
HEH.
MASTER CESARE!
HA HA! HA HA HA!
AH HA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!

WAIT A.
IS THAT YOU, JUAN?
Ick!
WHOA THERE!
CRAB
AAH!
TEETER
M-MY BROTHER, HE DID SOMETHING TO ME...
!
DRIP

MASTER CESARE!
THERE'S NO NEED TO FOLLOW HIM.
JUAN'S BODY...
...HAS BEEN POISONED.
MY LEGS... THEY FEEL LIKE THEY'RE MADE OF LEAD.
HOW STRANGE.
HUFF
HUFF
WOBBLE

SOB
SOB SOB
AAH!
N-NO!
DON'T FOLLOW ME!
I KNEW IT. YOU'RE... NOT HUMAN.
GET AWAY FROM ME... Y-YOU DEMON!
I ALWAYS CURSED GOD...
...FOR GIVING ME...A BROTHER LIKE YOU.

COUGH
BLOOD!
YOU ALWAYS WERE...
...RATHER SHARP.
WHOA!
NO!
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!
SLAP
CESARE!
YOU'RE WOUNDED!

I JUST WANTED A LIFE WHERE...I DIDN'T HAVE TO BE... DOMINATED BY YOU.
THEN I WOULDN'T... HAVE TO LIVE LIKE THIS...I COULD'VE HAD A M-MORE...
WHEEZE
M... MORE ...

DOES IT HURT, JUAN?
TO BE DRENCHED IN SO MUCH OF MY BLOOD MUST HURT A GREAT DEAL.
N-NO!
GAH!
STOP IT!
VERY SOON... I'LL MAKE THE PAIN GO AWAY...

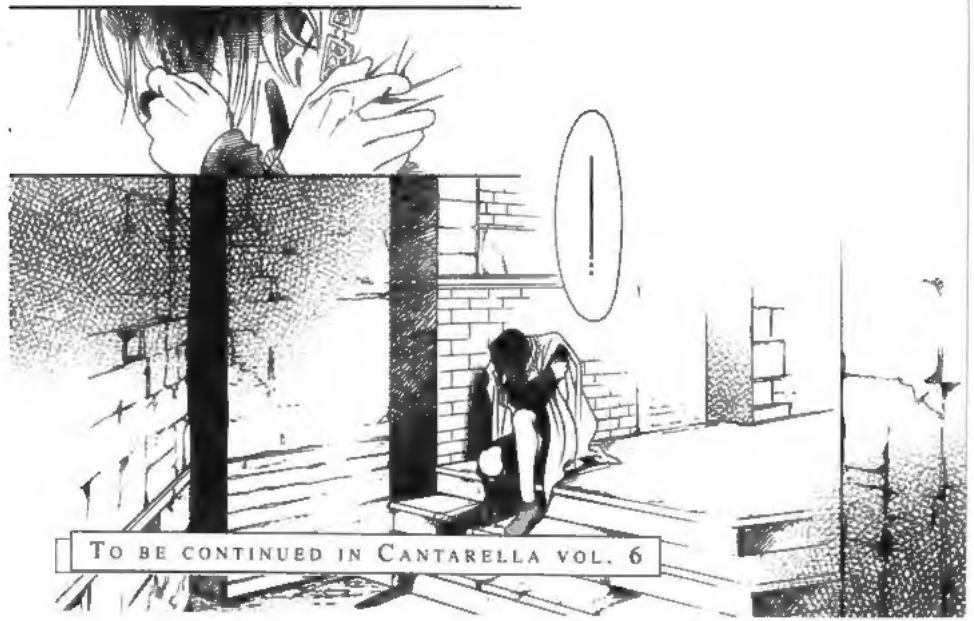
CESARE!
I...
I KNEW IT! IT'S TOO LATE FOR YOU!
!

SPLASH!!

YOU...
...WEREN'T BEING CONTROLLED BY THE DARKNESS?
THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN CONTROL THIS BODY IS ME.
THIS WAS BY MY WILL.
I USED THE EVIL WITHIN ME TO GAIN WHAT I DESIRED.

!
THE ONLY THING WE HAD BETWEEN US WAS HATRED.
IT'S TOO LATE ...
...FOR ME TO HAVE FEELINGS OF BROTHERLY LOVE...
WE WERE LINKED TO EACH OTHER BY A BOND OF MALICE.
THAT WAS ALL JUAN AND I HAD...

カンタレラ



TO BE CONTINUED IN CANTARELLA VOL. 6

Drink from the Cup of the Borgias...If You Dare!

When a pair of seductive eyes comes between Cesare and his brother Juan, the escalating tension between the two finally explodes in a frenzy of rage. Will Juan's sword glisten with Cesare's blood, or will Cesare's spiraling descent into madness lead to a much more gruesome end for his dear brother? Caught between the two blades is Cesare's loyal companion, Chiaro, whose concern for his friend may soon be overwhelmed by his horror at Cesare's ruthlessness...

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